**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Please cancel claim 2.

1. (Previously Presented) A device comprising:

an elongated, generally flexible tubular body having an axis, a proximal end, a distal end and a lumen longitudinally extending therethrough; and

a dilating tip slidably mounted on the distal end of the tubular body and comprising a segmented surface that is generally transverse to the axis of the tubular body and comprises a plurality of segments having proximal and distal ends, a generally rigid tube extending distally from the segmented surface and having a sharp distal end adapted to puncture tissue, and a ring slidably mounted to the tubular body, wherein the distal ends of the segments of the segmented surface are hingedly attached to the ring;

wherein proximal movement of the ring relative to the tubular body exerts a force on the segmented surface to thereby open the segmented surface.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Original) A device according to claim 1, where the segmented surface comprises two or more segments.

4. (Original) A device according to claim 1, where the segmented surface comprises three or more segments.

5. (Canceled).

6. (Canceled).

7. (Original) A device according to claim 1, wherein the dilating tip is generally funnel-shaped.

8. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the generally rigid tube of the dilating tip is segmented.

9. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the generally rigid tube of the dilating tip has a length ranging from about 2 mm to about 6 mm.

10. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the generally rigid tube of the dilating tip has a length ranging from about 3 mm to about 5 mm.

11. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the generally rigid tube of the dilating tip has an outer diameter ranging from about 0.6 mm to about 1 mm.

12. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein the generally rigid tube of the dilating tip has an outer diameter ranging from about 0.7 mm to about 0.8 mm.

13. (Original) A device according to claim 1, wherein the dilating tip comprises nitinol.

14. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, further comprising a wire extending proximally from the dilating tip to near the proximal end of the tubular body to effect proximal movement of the dilating tip relative to the tubular body.

15. (Original) A device according to claim 14, further comprising a slidable member on the proximal end of the tubular body, the slidable member being connected to the wire so that proximal movement of the slidable member pulls the wire and causes proximal movement of the dilating tip relative to the tubular body.

16. (Original) A device according to claim 15, further comprising a latch for maintaining the position of the slidable member relative to the tubular body when the dilating tip is in an open arrangement.

17. (Original) A device according to claim 1, further comprising a pressure valve at or near the proximal end of the tubular body.

18. (Previously Presented) A device comprising:

an elongated, generally flexible tubular body having an axis, a proximal end, a distal end and a lumen longitudinally extending therethrough;

a dilating tip slidably mounted on the distal end of the tubular body and comprising:

a ring mounted in surrounding relation to the distal end of the tubular body;

a segmented surface that is generally transverse to the axis of the tubular body, the segmented surface comprising three or more segments, each segment being hingedly attached to the ring; and

a generally rigid tube extending distally from the segmented surface, the tube having a sharp distal end adapted to puncture tissue and being segmented into three or more segments;

a slidable member connected to the ring of the dilating tip, wherein proximal movement of the slidable member relative to the tubular body exerts a force on the segmented surface and the generally rigid tube to thereby open the segmented surface and the generally rigid tube.

19. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 18, wherein the slidable member is connected to the ring of the dilating tip by a wire having a distal end attached to the ring of the dilating tip and a proximal end attached to the slidable member;
wherein proximal movement of the slidable member pulls the wire and causes proximal movement of the dilating tip relative to the tubular body.

20. (Canceled).

21. (Canceled).

22. (Canceled).

23. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 18, further comprising a latch for maintaining the position of the slidable member relative to the tubular body when the dilating tip is in an open arrangement.

24. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 18, further comprising a pressure valve at or near the proximal end of the tubular body.